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ABSTRACT

Information on successful postsecondary education for students with learning disabilities is provided. Suggestions on preparation and pre-planning for postsecondary education focus on the parents' role during pre-school, elementary school, junior high school, and high school. The school or career center counselor needs to be aware of the special learning needs of students with learning disabilities. The counselor can provide references so the student can research independently the most suitable postsecondary educational option. The student plays a major role in planning for the future and should be encouraged to advocate for himself in conjunction with parental and professional advocacy. Several fact sheets published by Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Handicaps (HEATH) are recommended, and helpful directories are noted. A list of 13 questions to ask when touring a potential choice of institutions of higher education is provided. A special college computer search system available from National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) is described. Helpful tips are given for when postsecondary education becomes a reality (what to do when applying and accepting). Suggestions from dyslexic students at Brown University include exercising discipline in the academic life, sitting up front in classes, using word processors for writing assignments, and becoming familiar with support resources. Contains 7 references. (SM)

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LEARNING DISABILITIES, POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION, AND YOU

BETH R. MILLER

John and Steve are sitting at their respective desks in the college dormitory room that they share. It is that time of the year again.... final exams. Dirty clothes are piled up in the corner. Crumpled up potato chip bags, empty cookie boxes, snack cake wrappers, and half-full coke cans abound everywhere. John is grimacing with an air of determination. He is pursuing a career in business, and this accounting final could prematurely end his career. Steve is muttering to himself as he tries to review his psychology notes. He wants to become a school social worker, and hopes he can get through the academics.

Seems like a pretty typical college scene which could take place anywhere. Why make note of it? Well, for one thing, Steve is a learning disabled college student. He is dyslexic with a short attention span, poor memory, and a tendency towards hyperactivity. This means that he has significant reading problems, cannot pay attention for too long, cannot hold things in his memory very well, and has problems sitting still. Not a particularly good candidate for college which requires a capacity for extensive reading, the ability to sustain attention, a good to excellent memory,and sitting still for hours at a time while studying. But, Steve decided back in elementary school that he wanted to attend college despite his learning problems. This brochure will help explain what to do once you have made, and are commited to, this decision.

Let us start off with some background information. The United States commission on Civil Rights in 1983 estimated that 50-75% of all disabled persons are unemployed. The more severe the handicap, the less of a chance that affected person will ever be employed. Thus, it is important to know that society tends to discriminate against disabled persons, especially in the realm of employment. The odds may be against you, and you might have to work twice as hard to achieve your career goals. But...it has, and can be, done.

Stan Shaw and Kay Norlander from the University of Connecticut, cite some interesting statistics. In 1981, P.M. Fielding claimed that there are 16 million

HE 021 527

learning disabled adults in the United States. It has been estimated that there are approximately 50,000 learning disabled students between the ages of 18-21. In 1982, White, Alley, Deshler,et.al. reported that 67% of the young adults diagnosed as learning disabled while in public school had post-high school educational plans. Dexter, in 1982, found that the transition from a successful high school support program to a college campus can be devastating for even the most capable learning disabled student. Vetter, in 1983, found that the increasing availability of comprehensive support services at the secondary education level has increased students' expectations for continued services in the post-secondary educational environment. To support this, Mangrum and Strichart (1984) report that learning disabled students comprised 3.1% of disabled college freshmen in 1978, 5.6% in 1980, and 6% in 1982. Thus, the numbers of learning disabled students attending college is slowly increasing. Shaw and Norlander also have demographic data showing a significant decrease in the traditional college-age population. This makes serving learning disabled students more attractive to many post-secondary institutions.

Believe it or not, our government has recognized the need to focus some national attention and monies on gainful employment of handicapped persons. The U.S. Department of Education in cooperation with the American Council on Education has established HEATH, or Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Handicaps. HEATH is a national clearinghouse on post-secondary education for handicapped individuals. Its newsletter is published three times yearly, and subscriptions are free upon request from the HEATH Resource Center (One Dupont Circle, Washington, D.C., 20036). HEATH puts out a wide variety of helpful publications (see appendix for order form), and its newletter provide invaluable. and up-to-the-minute information regarding higher education and the handicapped Subscribe to HEATH as a first step in formulating post-secondary game plans.

Just a few more statistics! HEATH, in a joint effort with the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, surveyed "College Freshmen with Disabilities Preparing for Employment, A Statistical Profile." (1985). The author, Paul Hippolitus, found that 14.8% of disabled freshmen were learning disabled. The highest concentration of learning disabled students was in two-year private colleges. Disabled students tended to rate themselves lower in math and writing

ability, physical and emotional health, popularity, and self-confidence. Disabled freshmen had slightly higher aspirations for an Associate's degree, Doctorate, medical and law degrees than all surveyed students. This survey concluded that there was almost non-existent data on the career ambitions of disabled persons, how they fared in college if they made it there, and how post-secondary institutions can best serve disabled students. A lot more studys need to be done.

Today, you as a learning disabled student desiring a post-secondary education, are somewhat of a pioneer. Keep this in mind as you read through this booklet, and start formulating questions and decisions. You will need to talk with your family, academic counselors, state agencies, and a sampling of post-secondary institutions to help compliment your own self-analysis of what it is that you want after high school graduation. Subscribe to HEATH, read its helpful publications, learn how to advocate for yourself, visit some local community colleges, network with other people who are doing what you want to do, gather and store relevant information. Most importantly, plan early and think ahead. Start preparing yourself for the demands of college life right now.

PART ONE: Preparation and Pre-Planning for Post-Secondary Education

I. WHAT IS THE PARENTS' ROLE?

You, as the parents of a learning handicapped child, play a crucial role in enabling your child to pursue post-secondary education. The College Board Study Commission found that college aspirations, college selection, and the application process is most influenced by the immediate family. What can you do to best prepare your child for college?

"Start early." Experts agree that most students can succeed in college if parents start early enough to prepare them for the rigors of higher education. It is important to build high expectations in your child without creating pressure. Post-secondary educational planning needs to start in elementary school. An early obstacle to good planning or any planning at all, is the lack of good quality counseling. As a parent, you will need to advocate for good counseling services which will probably not be a routine offering at most elementary and middle schools.

Early work experience, volunteer or paid, is essential. And do not forget about early and regular contact with successfully-employed learning disabled adults and learning disabled college students to serve as role models.

Parents, familiarize yourselves with your state's regulations dealing with the education of learning disabled students. Advocate for your child from the time he enters kindergarten. Make sure the Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.) achieves the goals of preparing your child for entrance into a post-secondary institution or the job market upon high school graduation. In the case of vocational education, insist on the formation of an Individualized Transition Team. (For more information on Transition, contact your local school district, vocational rehabilitation or developmental disabilities state agency, or your state's Transition Specialist). You can find out on your own what educational and vocational possibilities exist for your child in the community. Visit the local vocational rehabilitation agency, other relevant adult social services agencies, programs in operation, vocational technical institutes, community colleges, and four-year colleges. Information is always power.

From the time your child enters school emphasize -

* Personal appearance and good grooming
* Good social and communication skills
* Physical fitness
* Participation in integrated community activities (leisure, recreational, volunteer and paid work experience)
* Responsibility at home

What follows is a more detailed guide according to school levels.

Pre-School

Let your child explore his natural curiosity. Give frequent encouragment like, "You can do it." or "Good for you!" Watch out for overly structured and formalized preschools.

Elementary School

Discuss school events with your child each day for several minutes or so. Plan evenings around homework by having a quiet time with no television, and an adult available for help. Monitor your child's learning progress from kindergarten on. Inquire about placement decisions and criteria, and periodically review confidential school records. Express your confidence to the teachers that your child can do it. If possible, try to model leadership through active school participation.

Try to provide as many enrichment, self-esteem building, and natural learning activities as possible. One way to do this is to assign specific job responsibilities to your child around the house. Another way is to create opportunities for your child to learn more about careers, the world of work, and how learning disabled students fare as adults. Go visit with your child, local vocational rehabilitation agencies, vocational technical institutes, and successful school and adult training programs. Work with the local school district to ensure that vocational training at the least, and hopefully job placement, are integral parts of your child's schooling. If your child is leaning towards college, then talk about college as something to look forward to. Tell personal (or other people's) college anecdotes and share in college momentos. Go visit community colleges and four year institutions. Attend sporting or other college-sponsored events. Always try to talk with other older learning disabled students who are pursuing post-secondary education.

Start promoting exercise, good-grooming, responsible money-handling, completion of household chores, being out in the community, and being as independent as possible.

One more thing...start saving!

Junior High School

Continue to talk about daily school happenings. Be on top of how your child is being placed, and what he is doing academically. Allow your child to start assuming more responsibility for budgeting his own time and completing school assignments on time. Require the completion of household chores on a regular basis, and aim for the correct and full completion of assigned chores. Involve your child

in community leisure activities. Assist your child in finding paid or volunteer work outside of the home during the summer,weekends, after school (depending upon what your child can manage). Continue to emphasize good grooming, physical exercise, and the development of good social and communication skills.

In the case of vocational education, make sure that your child's IEP addresses specific vocational goals in a variety of potential jobs. Find out what the high school job training program is all about. Actively support the teacher's efforts to provide job-training in community based sites. Contact the local vocational training state agency on your own, and find out about available training services and job possibilities.

High School

Continue all those activities designed to make your child as independent as possible. We will talk about vocational training in this section, and college attendance in the following section (What is the counselor's role?). By the time your child has reached age 15 or 16, the major part of the school day should be spent in vocational training. Upon graduation, a specific job or adult training program placement should be identified by the parent-professional team. This is best accomplished through the formation of a transition team which consists of at least the parents, teacher, and rehabilitation agency representative, and sees to it that your child's IEP specifies vocational training at listed work sites in the community. It is helpful if you can research the available community adult work training/ employment programs, and feed this information to the transition team. In this way, you can encourage the school personnel to find, place, and train your child in either a full-time or part-time job paying wages while your child is still in school. Above all, just remember....it is important that a post-graduation employment plan be formulated and in place prior to high school graduation.

II. WHAT IS THE COUNSELOR'S ROLE?

The school counselor (or career-center counselor) also plays an extremely important part in guiding and appropriately advising learning disabled students

who wish to pursue post-secondary education. Too often, school counselors are beseiged with overwhelming work-responsibilities, and are unable to provide the in-depth services that learning disabled students require. If a school counselor is not able to meet the learning disabled student's needs, then students should be referred to other academic counseling resources. One example is the Office for Special Needs Students at a local community college. Another example are organizations that advocate for disabled persons present in the community. Both resources should be able to provide needed information and direction.

It is most beneficial if the counselor is somewhat aware of the special learning needs of learning disabled students, and has a commitment to post-secondary education for these individuals. The counselor should be familiar with the school district's vocational and academic programs for learning disabled students. The counselor should be knowledgeable about the state's regulations concerning handicapped student education. The counselor should be aware of specialized education programs that are available at local post-secondary institutions and/or have a list of references that provide this kind of information.

Before providing large amounts of information which may overwhelm the learning disabled student, it is recommended that the counselor work through a decision-making process with the student. What are the student's educational/ employment goals at this time? Are they realistic given the specific nature of learning disabilities present, past school performance, interests and hobbies, financial situation, etc.? What has the student done in the way of preparing himself for these goals (attention to good grooming, development of adequate social and communication skills, accepted responsibility at home, involvement in community activities, etc.)? After establishing how the student arrived at his decision, and if this is a reasonable decision, the counselor should summarize the data collected thus far while presenting available options. Generally speaking, there are four-year and two-year colleges and universities, vocational-technical schools, home study, basic adult education, and perhaps specialized adult education/ work-training programs present only in that community.

At this point, the counselor will probably want to encourage the student to visit local institutions that are of interest to him. The student should interview a dean associated with student services, and talk with other learning disabled students on campus. (More on this in the following section). The counselor will

meetings are monitered, instructors are carefully selected, and cooperative advisement between the special services and academic departments is arranged for.

In summary, the role of the counselor is to assist the learning disabled student in making appropriate post-secondary educational plans. Once decisions have been made the counselor helps the student act upon his decision. This is done by assessing academic goals vis-à'-vis health, learning, financial, or other limitations. The counselor can provide additional information about special programs and services available to learning disabled students on college campuses. The counselor can also provide references so that the student can research on his own which post-secondary educational option best suits his needs.

III. WHAT IS THE STUDENT'S ROLE?

You, as the learning disabled student, have a significant role to play in the planning of your own future. It is true that you have been labeled as a person who demonstrates some difficulty in some areas of learning. It is likely that people around you tend to discourage you and say you can't do things. The reasons why people put other people down are complex. It is best to develop confidence in yourself, and be your own judge. Think about people like Albert Einstein and Thomas Alva Edison. They changed the course of human civilization, and they were learning disabled. (See Lloyd J. Thompson, M.D.'s "Learning Disabilities in Men of Eminence," Bulletin of the Orton Society 19, p. 113-120; and Mildred and Victor Goertzl's Cradles of Eminence, Little and Brown, 1962 for additional examples).

What are some things you can be doing to prepare yourself for the road ahead? You can start advocating for yourself in conjunction with parental and professional advocacy for you. Try to take an active role in the formulation of your Individualized Education Plan, (IEP), Individualized Transition Plan (ITP), and/or Individualized Work Rehabilitation Plan (IWRP). Be sure to express your needs, remain flexible, and be open to change.

Plan ahead and gather information. The first step is to realistically assess your college potential with the help of parents and school personnel. What have you done, and what do you like to do now? Make a list of hobbies, interests, significant like experiences. Include paid and volunteer work experience and community activities.

From this list analyze those skills that you already have, and those skills that you would like to develop. Based on an analysis of your skills, interests, and personal goals, come up with several career paths that have potential for you.

Once you have an idea of your strengths, weaknesses, needs, and several career alternatives, you are ready to begin your research. First of all, what specific courses and activities in high school will help better prepare you for college? You should be enrolled in an academic curriculum with resource room help available to you. Consider taking courses that deal with independent living, time management, and study skills. Other useful courses may include typing, word processing, how to use computers. Any kind of enrichment course such as how to improve reading, memory, writing, and vocabulary skills are helpful to an aspiring college student. Striving for independence and taking responsibility for yourself is good training for adulthood in general. Participating in community events and accepting positions of leadership and responsibility will also help prepare you for the demands of college life.

At this point, you may wish to look at some interesting fact sheets published by HEATH at no charge to you. (Request from HEATH Resource Center, One Dupont Circle, Suite 670, Washington, D.C., 20036-1193).

1. Strategies for Advising Disabled Students
2. Career Planning and Placement Strategies
3. Education Beyond High School - The Choice is Yours
4. Education for Employment (Vocational Education)
5. Learning Disabled Students in Post-Secondary Education
6. Make the Most of Your Opportunities
7. HEATH Resource Directory
8. Newsletter Subscription
9. State Resources List (indicate which state)
10. Access to the Science Lab and Classroom
11. Measuring Student Progress in the classroom

There are also a number of directories available to help you out in your research. You can purchase them directly from the publisher, or at a local bookstore.

You can also borrow them from your local lending public library or school library.

Classroom Success for the Learning Disabled. Suzanne H. Stevens. John F. Blair Publishers, 1406 Plaza Drive, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, 27103 $8.95

College Programs for Learning Disabled Students. National Association of College Admissions Counselors, 9933 Lawley Avenue, Suite 500, Skokie, Illinois, 60077, 1985, $5.00

Colleges and Universities that Accept Students with Learning Disabilities. ACLD, 4156 Library Road, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15234, $20.00

Directory of College Facilities and Services for the Handicapped. Publications Library, Oryx Press, 2214 North Central at Encanto Phoenix, Arizona 85004, 1983.

Federation of Children with Learning Disabilities Guide for Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities, FCLD, 99 Park Avenue, New York, New York, 1985. $5.00

Guide to Post-Secondary Educational Opportunities for the Learning Disabled. Time Out to Enjoy, 113 Garfield Street, Oak Park, Illinois, 60304, 1981. $12.00

Lovejoy's College Guide for the Learning Disabled. Charles Straughn II and Marvelle Colby. Simon and Shuster, 1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, New York 10020, 1985. $10.95.

National Directory of Four Year Colleges, Two Year Colleges and Post-High School Training Programs for Young People with Learning Disabilities. Partners in Publishing, Box 50347, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74150, 4th Edition, 1981. $11.95.

Okay, you have made the decision to pursue some form of higher education. You have gathered necessary health, academic, vocational and personal information to help guide you in the search for an appropriate educational program. You have done some reading, and perhaps have glanced through a directory or two. You might now want to consider the idea of contacting the local vocational rehabilitation office, vocational-technical institutes, adult training programs, community colleges and/or four year institutions to set up some campus tours and interviews. The vocational rehabilitation counselor may be able to assist you in your planning and negotiations for special services/financial aid if you qualify for services.

It really helps to visit any institution that you have potential interest in if possible. You can get a feel for the physical layout, learning environment, and available services. Talking with learning disabled and non-learning disabled students provides more insight and helpful information than a campus brochure or directory entry.

When you contact an institution, explain that you are a special needs student who would like to interview with someone from the Office for Disabled Student Services. See if a brief campus tour can be arranged while you are there.

Come prepared with a list of questions. This will structure the interview, and make it more beneficial for you. Be sure to ask for any printed materials describing the institution's programs and services that you can take home with you. It is probably a good idea to bring a parent or friend along who can jot down notes while you ask questions.

Here is a list of some questions you may want to ask:

1. What are the admissions requirements? How does one go about applying for admission?
2. Generally speaking, what is the nature of those specific academic programs or course curriculums that you are interested in?
3. What kinds of basic course requirements exist?
4. What kinds of special services are available? (eg., priority registration, tutoring, note-takers, taped textbooks, modified testing conditions, study centers, diagnostic testing, counseling, etc.) How are special services obtained? Is there a charge?
5. What is the background and training of the special services support staff?
6. How does administration and faculty respond to the needs of learning disabled students?
7. How many learning disabled students make it to graduation? In what fields?
8. What kinds of campus activities are available to the students?
9. Is the campus accessible by foot? Is there any kind of bus service?
10. Are banks, grocery stores, book stores, etc. located close to the campus?
11. What is the climate like, especially in the winter?
12. How many learning disabled students are presently enrolled? Is it possible to talk to some of the other learning disabled students?
13. Is it possible to have a tour of the campus?

This is a general list. Brainstorm with your parents, school counselors, and friends to come up with additional questions specific to your situation.

Another item that you should be attending to is signing up to take required college entrance examinations or General Education Degree test if you are not enrolled in a high school diploma program. For specialized GED accomodations, contact your State Adult Education Agency. For the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test), request "Admissions Testing Program: Services for Handicapped Students," Box 2891, Princeton, New Jersey, 08541, (609) 734-3867. For the ACT (Achievement College Test) Assessment, request "Special Testing Guide," Test Administration, P.O. Box 168, Iowa City, Iowa 52243, (319) 337-1332. It is advised that you attempt to take the test(s) within the normal time span before you take untimed versions. However, this is a personal decision which I will leave up to you.

This section will describe a college computer search system that is offered by NCCE (National Committee for Citizens in Education) for as little as $25.00. It is something you may wish to consider in the interests of saving precious time and energy on your part. The ACCESS Clearinghouse contains two databases of potential interest to you:

1) Information about nearly 800 colleges and universities which provide services for learning disabled students.
2) Financial Aid File - information on hundreds of scholarships or grants that students may be eligible for including federal and state loan and grant programs.

Please call 1-800-NET-WORK (638-9675) for additional information on how to obtain a computerized college search program between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

After you have selected a group of potential schools, you may want to do some reading about them. The Selective Guide to Colleges, by Edward B. Fiske (education editor of The New York Times) includes two-to-three page critiques of 291 schools based upon candid student interviews ($10.95 at your local bookstore). Peterson's Annual Guide to Undergraduate Study: Four-Year Colleges includes essays on over 700 colleges, and gives tips on financial aid and standardized tests. (P.O. Box 2123, Princeton, New Jersey, 08540; October 1985; $13.95).

Let us take a breather for one minute and see where we are at in this process. You have done a lot of talking with your parents, friends, school personnel, and learning disabled college students. Perhaps someone has advised you to read an excellent book on career decision-making called What Color is Your Parachute? by Richard Bolles.* Maybe you have been in contact with local support organizations and adult services agencies. Hopefully, you have visited some school campuses, had interviews with appropriate college staff-persons, and had a chance to talk with currently enrolled learning disabled students. You have some idea of what your career goals are, what your learning needs are, what you can afford, and what kind of a school you want to attend. You have done some research either in the way of computerized college searches and/or reading of college profiles in reference books. You have even signed up or perhaps already taken the necessary college entrance examinations. Now it is time to make formal application, see where you are accepted, decide where to enroll, and prepare yourself for freshman year.

PART TWO: What to do when Post-Secondary Education becomes a reality!

I. APPLYING

Sitting in front of you are a stack of papers that represent college entrance applications. They appear foreboding to you. From the outset, enlist someone's aid in filling out these applications. It is very important that you do as good a job as possible in completing the applications. Before you get to work, check with the college's Office of Special Student Services to see if you should go through regular admissions or special admissions. It is probably better to get accepted through regular admissions if you can, and then make specialized arrangements as needed. The Office of Special Student Services is in the best position to advise you about this. One more thing, try and apply as early as possible.

It is recommended that you make several photo-copies of each college application, and use the photo-copies as "dry-runs." This is a good chance to practice time management skills. On a large wall calendar, block out the due dates of each application. Estimate how much time will be needed to complete each application,

* (Ten Speed Press, Berkley, California, 3rd Edition, 1984)

and plan accordingly. Try to work during your more productive peaks (eg., early morning, early afternoon, right after dinner, later evening, etc.), and take advantage of weekends and holidays. Try to avoid marathon work sessions which will tire you out, achieve minimum results, and frustrate you in the long-run. Work for about an hour a day, taking breaks as needed. The consistency of effort is more important than the length of individual work sessions. Make sure that your work schedule is compatible with the person who is helping you.

Essay questions on any kind of application are always the least-favored and most-avoided items. With your helper, think about the question outloud saying whatever comes to your mind. Let your helper record things as you say them. Now, the two of you can go through these initial thoughts with you expanding and modifying as needed. Once you have come up with complete sentences, arrange them so that they read coherently and logically. Your helper can assist with editing and proof-reading.

Once you have completed the dry-run of an application to your satisfaction, make every attempt to have it typed. Remember to make and keep a copy of the completed application for yourself. Go out and celebrate after the last application is done. You deserve it!

II. ACCEPTANCE

That moment of simultaneous truth, wonderment, ecstasy, questioning, and realization finally comes. You have read and re-read the letter of acceptance over so many times that you can recite the letterhead by heart. You are certain there must be some mistake. What college could possibly want you? All of those years of the folks nagging at you to get your homework done, get your chores done, look your best, get a job, get out there, etc. All of the work in the past years with tutors, extra classes, long nights of impossible homework, reading up on colleges, applying to colleges, dreaming about colleges....Was it all worth it? I will let you be the judge of that.

After the initial shock and excitement has subsided, reality will set in. Yes, you are going to college! What do you do now?

Well, for one thing, treat yourself to a fun and relaxing summer if possible. There is a lot of hard work ahead, so enjoy your leisure time now. It is necessary to think ahead but don't spend your entire summer worrying about the fall. From the beginning, put yourself in control of the situation. This will ease those panic attacks which are sure to occur as college starting time gets closer.

Upon receiving your letter of acceptance, contact the Office of Special Students Services. Meet with them as soon as possible. Figure out what special services you will be needing, and work out an implementation plan with the staff. This way, you should have the needed services in place on the first day of classes. Also, discuss the possibility of having a "single" dormitory room.

Plan to attend student orientation, and have your questions written down and prepared in advance. Try to get an overall picture of how the college is laid out, and how it is run. Take notes as needed.

Plan to arrive at least one week prior to the start of classes. Move in all of your things, and organize your study space. Walk around the campus, find out where things are (like classroom buildings, the libraries), and how long it takes to get to different places. Open up a local bank account. Locate near-by grocery stores, laundromats, xeroxing shops, drugstores, department stores, and health services centers. Don't forget to check into recreational and leisure activities. If you are already registered, try to buy your books and supplies before the huge student rush. Hopefully, you were permitted to register early and have all of your classes locked in prior to general student registration.

Stop by at the Office of Special Student Services. Check on the progress of your services. Find out where the study and resource centers are. Perhaps the staff has scheduled some welcoming events for all new incoming learning disabled students that you can attend.

I shall conclude this section with a reference to a handy little booklet put out by a group of dyslexics at Brown University. In order to receive a copy of "Dyslexics at Brown: A Student Perspective," and/or additional information, please write to: Dyslexics at Brown, Box 114, Student Activities Office, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, 02912.

Dyslexic students at Brown University recommend that you exercise much discipline in your academic life. Adequate rest, eating well, and exercise are all important to keep you functioning mentally at your best. Study in a quiet place, and take frequent study breaks. Buy a large desk or wall calendar. Write in when assignments are due. Decide how long it will take to complete each assignment. Prioritize your assignments in order of importance. Write out daily and/or weekly lists of study goals.

Try to sit up front in classes. Develop some form of note-taking shorthand. Be discriminating in taking notes. Leave blanks which you can fill in when you review your notes later to see if they make sense. Try to do this the same day, and compare your notes with either another classmates' or a tape-recorder version. Learning how to take decent notes is a study time-saver.

Reading assignments can pose real problems. Look at titles, headings, sub-headings, table of contents, pictures, and introductory paragraphs to get a general idea of what the course will cover. Be an active reader by underlining important facts and taking notes. Perhaps you can obtain tape-recorded versions of your textbooks (Talking Books).

The students advise that you word-process your paper-writing assignments if possible. Studying for exams can be more effective with a tutor, within a study group, or with the help of the college learning center.

Perhaps most important to your survival as a college student with learning disabilities is to familiarize yourself with support resources, and create your own support network. Admit to yourself your need for special help, and accept the fact that you will have to work harder than other students. Remind yourself often of your longer-termed career goals and life aspirations. Surround yourself with inspiration. Hang tough, remain open-minded, believe in yourself. We will see you at college graduation.

I can't top this wise advice. All I can add is, "Good luck and go for it!"

Sincerely,

Beth R. Miller

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